

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of August 31, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Galen Stearns called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Selectmen Bruce Breton, Charles McMahon, and Roger Hohenberger were present. Town Administrator David Sullivan was delayed and arrived at 7:40 PM. Selectman Ross McLeod was excused. Mr. Stearns read the agenda into the record, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Breton advised that he had attended the Cobbett's Pond Improvement Association meeting the previous Saturday, and found it very informative. He also noted that the CPIA will be issuing a report some time in October.

LIAISON REPORTS: None.

MINUTES: Mr. Breton moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to approve the minutes of August 3rd as written. Passed 4-0.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED: Mr. McMahon advised that the Windham Economic Development Committee will be hosting a presentation entitled "Getting Down to Business" on September 17th at 7:30 PM at the High School.

ABATEMENTS: Mr. McMahon moved and Mr. Breton seconded to accept the recommendation of the Tax Assessor for the remaining seventeen abatements for tax year 2008; both to approve or deny. Passed 4-0.

Tax Assessor Rex Norman then advised the Board that he had received a notice of decision from the Board of Tax and Land Appeals relative to a tax year 2006 case, and that the Town had prevailed in the matter. He then extended congratulations to Town Counsel.

Mr. McMahon inquired why the Town had prevailed, and Mr. Norman explained that the BTLA felt that an independent appraisal submitted by the owner was not credible, and that the owner now has 30 days to appeal the decision.

WORKSHOP: The Board met in workshop session with the Chief of Police. Chief Lewis led a Powerpoint presentation on several items, highlights of which included:

- Calls for service, to date, have increased substantially over this same period last year. It is projected that approximately 23,000 calls will have been received by year end.
- Response times have improved 6-8% over 2008
- The number of offenses have decreased and the number of arrests have increased; an indication that the officers are a visible deterrent and presence around Town.
- Traffic stops have increased, as have the number of verbal warnings and arrests; written citations have decreased. Brief discussion ensued regarding "selective enforcement", which the Chief explained entails documented enforcement of a specific area or intersection.

- DUI arrests are up, and the Chief feels this trend will continue as the Department maintains a zero tolerance policy and a good conviction rate. Discussion ensued regarding breathalyzer testing versus blood testing. The department utilizes the latter only, and the costs to do so are covered by the State.
- Motor vehicle accidents are down, and a brief discussion ensued regarding the impacts of the I-93/Route 111 projects on the numbers. The Chief did not feel there were more accidents being caused as a result.
- Budget expended to date is 52% versus 65% for the same period in 2008. Overtime has been greatly reduced, despite being two positions short. Discussion ensued regarding earned time and detail coverage, and the option of contractors to utilize flagmen versus officers for projects in Town. The Chief noted that he maintained some projects should require an officer as opposed to flagmen, particularly those on major roads, and that such detail opportunities are contractually provided for.
- *Applicant testing:* A larger response than expected was received, and 38 overall will be taking the oral boards. The Chief expects to be able to fill the two vacant positions via this round of testing.
- *Organizational Structure:* The Chief proposes a restructuring of the Department to include two (2) Captains; one to oversee the Operational aspects and the other to provide Support Services. Chief Lewis believes this will increase the department's fluidity and response. Discussion ensued regarding Captain Yatsevich's status. Chief Lewis clarified that, should Captain Yatsevich return to duty, one of the divisions will be his.

Chief Lewis explained that this structure is fairly standard throughout surrounding communities, and that his proposal was to advance the fifth Sergeant position to Captain, which could be done within the budget for this year. Mr. Sullivan noted that, overall, there would be approximately a \$7,000 comparing top step pay for Captain and Sergeant (including extra pays). Discussion ensued and the general consensus was to support the concept of restructuring. The Board deferred making a decision, however, to allow for Mr. McLeod's input and for members to discuss the matter further with the Chief should they wish to.

- Sergeant Carl Wagner made presentation to the Board regarding the purchase of body armor for the Department, which is maintained under a five (5) year replacement cycle in keeping with Department of Justice recommendations.

Sgt. Wagner outlined the minimum ballistic resistance standards, and related testing standards, and indicated that the department wished to upgrade each staff member's vests to meet the newly established recommendation by way of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 1998. He explained that, currently, \$5,610 is budgeted for a partial replacement and that the Department wished to replace the remainder through the 50% reimbursement grant. Sgt. Wagner also requested the Board waive the bid process to allow for a sole source vendor.

Discussion ensued regarding the grant application process and acceptance procedures, and funding for the delta of \$1,853 between the grant funding and the available budget. The Chief indicated the latter is available within his bottom line budget.

After further, brief discussion, Mr. McMahon moved and Mr. Breton seconded to waive the bid process. Passed 3-1, with Mr. Hohenberger opposed.

Mr. McMahon then moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to authorize the expenditure of \$14,926 as requested, subject to grant approval and acceptance at a formal public hearing. Passed 4-0.

- Sergeant Michael Caron made presentation to the Board relative to the installation of laptops within the cruisers. He explained that the Department has been endeavoring to do this in the five (5) front line vehicles for several years, and that the Department currently has the laptops on hand through the Project 54 Grant previously awarded to the Town. Sgt. Caron then explained that the installation of the laptops would need to be arranged through IMC, the Town's current records vendor, and that the cost with related software, etc. to do so would be \$22,690. Further, additional hardware/equipment is needed and, with labor charges, the total project cost will be \$26,183.15.

Sgt. Caron indicated that completion of this project would allow for officers to run motor vehicle and local checks on scene, would provide an additional means of communication, and aide in officer reporting. He noted that there is currently \$26,700 +/- in the Asset Forfeiture Account, which the Department would like to use to complete this project. It was noted that the Chief has sole discretion to expend these funds on police-related items.

Discussion ensued regarding the age of the laptops, warranty information, and the tangible/intangible costs of moving away from IMC.

Mr. Breton then moved and Mr. McMahon seconded to waive the bid process as requested. Passed 3-1, with Mr. Hohenberger opposed.

ALARM BIDS: Mr. Sullivan indicated that, as discussed the previous week, further review of the alarm bids had been conducted with the two (2) primary vendors by staff. He noted the following:

- American Alarm (formerly Riel Security and the Town's current vendor) offers six (6) technicians with a four hour response time. Emergency Alarm Response Systems (EARS) offers one (1) primary technician and a four hour response time.
- American Alarm has been the Town's vendor for approximately 10 years, and provided excellent service to date. There has been limited interaction with EARS, however, their references were positive.
- Staff did express some reservations about EARS relative to their only having a single technician and a lack of response in the past, and a 30-day out clause would be recommended.

- The vendors' bids were submitted as follows:

Town Hall modifications

American Alarm: \$6,720.70

EARS: \$5,970.00

AED Installations

American Alarm: \$2,266.00

EARS: \$1,711.00

Alarm Monitoring:

American Alarm: \$4,308.00

EARS: \$3,000.00

Service Calls:

American Alarm: \$75.00/hour (min. 2 hours)

EARS: \$49.50/hour (min. 2 hours)

Mr. Sullivan advised that staff could not, after all their review and discussion, and considering the cost savings offered by EARS proposal, justify remaining with American Alarm despite their years of excellent service. After a brief discussion, Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. Breton seconded to award the bid to EARS as recommended. Passed 4-0.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Sullivan advised that National Grid would hopefully be onsite to relocate the guy wire at the Castle Hill bridge next week, and requested that the Board execute the certificate of substantial completion. He added that it still appears that the project will come in under budget and the Town's portion will be minimal, if any is required at all.

Mr. McMahon requested the Board consider for discussion at the next meeting a proposal from the Windham Baseball Softball League to install lighting at the fields at Griffin Park. After a brief discussion regarding green lighting, a lighting map and impacts to 93, it was determined that this item will be placed on the September 14th agenda.

Mr. Sullivan indicated that a clarification had been obtained relative to the tie-in of Londonbridge Road to the detention pond at the High School. He noted that, after several meetings, a fair agreement was reached with American Excavating relative to the additional cost for the tie-in of \$7,500 as opposed to \$18-19,000 normal costs. Mr. Sullivan requested the Board's approval to add this amount to the contract, which he remains confident will not exceed the \$900,000 available in light of savings in other areas.

Mr. McMahon moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to amend the contract as recommended. A brief discussion ensued, and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Sullivan advised that the agreements in place for the Londonbridge Road extension have been amended to reflect the Trusts of Mr. Logan and Ms. McKenna and other language and procedural clarifications..

Mr. Breton moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to adjourn. Passed 4-0. Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendi Devlin, Administrative Assistant

Note: These minutes are in draft form and have not been submitted to the Board for approval.